

Houston area Congressman Gene Green (TX-29), Congressman John Culberson (TX-07), Congressman Frank Wolf (VA-10), and Congressman C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger (MD-02) along with 58 of their colleagues from 18 states have sent a letter to President Obama outlining compromise principles that would preserve NASA's human spaceflight program.

In February, the president proposed canceling NASA's Constellation Program and reducing the Exploration Systems Mission Directorate by \$5.7 billion over five years. The congressional group believes Obama's proposal jeopardizes the country's leadership in space and could put our national security at risk.

"We hope the Administration is willing to work with us on the compromise," Rep. Green said. "It is an important step in ensuring we save our valuable workforce and keeps America as the leader in space exploration."

The bipartisan group (37 Republicans and 25 Democrats) urged the president to preserve the highly trained and skilled workforce connected with the manned spaceflight program through the immediate development of a heavy lift vehicle. NASA has, to date, invested approximately \$10 billion in the Constellation program. The 62 signers of the letter contend that immediate commencement of its heavy lift vehicle development and continued development of the Orion crew exploration vehicle will ensure the safe deployment of humans beyond low earth orbit in approximately 6 years while preserving our workforce and defense industrial base. This will further the President's own commitment to launching humans to an asteroid by 2025 and to Mars by the mid-2030s, lawmakers say.

"This is a good compromise with broad bipartisan support," Culberson stated. "I'm hopeful that the Administration will come to the table to preserve America's leadership role in space."

"I urge the president to embrace these core principles to ensure continued U.S. leadership in space," said Wolf. "The immediate development of a heavy lift rocket and crew capsule to take American astronauts beyond low earth orbit is something that all supporters of NASA can unite behind."

The technologies discovered and developed from the spaceflight program have increased our national security, the group says. They say the loss of the Constellation program, will cost the nation a ready inducement for continued high technology education to fill the pipeline of

America's best and brightest minds to our national security programs.

"I am concerned we are in danger of losing the space race to countries like Russia and China if we don't continue our manned space program and make a serious investment in long-term research and development. I believe we can come to some sort of compromise with the administration to save these jobs, cut costs, advance America's presence in space and protect our country's national security all at the same time," said Ruppertsberger, chairman of the Technical and Tactical Intelligence Subcommittee.

Support for NASA's human spaceflight program has been received from industry experts and dozens of former astronauts including Neil Armstrong, Jim Lovell, and Gene Cernan.

The complete list of cosigners: Arizona - Trent Franks (R), Ed Pastor (D); Ohio - Steven LaTourette (R), Michael Turner (R); Maryland - Dutch Ruppersberger (D); New York - Maurice Hinchey (D); Kansas - Lynn Jenkins (R); Virginia - Frank Wolf (R); Colorado - Ed Perlmutter (D), John Salazar (D); Louisiana - Joseph Cao (R), John Fleming (R), Charlie Melancon (D), Steve Scalise (R), Rodney Alexander (R); Alabama - Mike Rogers (R); Georgia - Sanford Bishop (D); Florida - Suzanne Kosmas (D), Bill Posey (R), Alan Grayson (D), Adam Putnam (R), Ander Crenshaw (R), Jeff Miller (R), Ron Klein (D), Corrine Brown (D), Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D), C.W. Bill Young (R), Mario Diaz-Balart (R), Lincoln Diaz-Balart (R), Tom Rooney (R); California - Laura Richardson (D), Ken Calvert (R), **John Campbell (R)**, Buck McKeon (R); Oregon - David Wu (D); Washington - Cathy McMorris Rodgers (R); Pennsylvania - Robert Brady (D); Rhode Island - Jim Langevin (D); Missouri - Todd Akin (R); Texas - Gene Green (D), John Culberson (R), Sheila Jackson-Lee (D), Henry Cuellar (D), John Carter (R), Al Green (D), Ted Poe (R), Mac Thornberry (R), Mike McCaul (R), Kevin Brady (R), Ciro Rodriguez (D), Ruben Hinojosa (D), Solomon Ortiz (D), Silvestre Reyes (D), Joe Barton (R), Charles Gonzalez (D), Kay Granger (R), Pete Sessions (R), Michael Conaway (R), Michael Burgess (R), Louie Gohmert (R), Kenny Marchant (R), Lamar Smith (R).